

THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED:

1. A method for maintaining a status indication in a network operations center for a terminal adapter connected to a network node, comprising the steps of:
 - 5 receiving a first status update message from the terminal adapter by the network node indicating a first parameter file version number stored in the memory of the terminal adapter, the first status update message further including a terminal adapter identification number and a first primary communication path status;
relaying the first status update message from the network node to the network
10 operations center;
receiving the first status update message at the network operations center and examining the terminal identification number and the parameter file version number; and
recording a status indication and recording time in a status indication table at the
network operations center, wherein the status indication table associates the status
15 indication and recording time with the terminal adapter identification number.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising recoding the first primary communication path status indicator in the status indication table.
- 20 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the network operations center after receiving the first update message compares the first primary communications status with a second primary communications status stored in memory and issues a notification message if the first primary communications status is different from the second primary communications status.
- 25 4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of the network operations center downloading to the terminal adapter a second parameter file version number and a parameter file in response to receiving a first status update message.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of downloading by the network operations center to the terminal adapter a plurality of addresses in response to receiving a first status updates message.

5 6. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of
 computing a first authentication data in the network operations center; and
 downloading from the network operations center to the terminal adapter
 encryption data used by the terminal adapter to authenticate the terminal adapter to the
 network.

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7. The method of claim 6 further comprising the steps of
 receiving at the network operations center a second authentication data sent by
 the terminal adapter processed in part using the encryption data; and
 comparing the first and second authentication data.

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8. The method of claim 7 further comprising the step of
 sending a response from the network to the terminal adapter indicating the
 terminal adapter is authenticated if the first and second authentication data are equal.

20 9. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
 starting a status update timer in the network operations center associated with the
 terminal identification number;

resetting the status update timer if a second status update message is received
 associated with the terminal identification number or a transaction is detected originating
 25 from the terminal adapter;

determining whether the status update timer exceeds a defined limit; and
 issuing a notification based using in part upon information indicated in the status
 indication table if the status update time exceeds the defined limit.

30 10. The method of claim 9 wherein the notification is an email sent to an address
 associated with the status indication table.

11. The method of claim 9 wherein the notification is a telephone call to a telephone number associated with the status indication table.

5 12. A system for maintaining a status in a network operations center of a terminal adapter connected to a transaction network comprising:

a network operatively connected to the terminal adapter adapted to receive a first status indication message from the terminal adapter, the first status indication message including a terminal identification number, a first parameter file version number, and a
10 first communication path status indicator; and

a network operations center operatively connected to the network adapted to receive the first status indication message from the network, the network operations center comprising a processor and memory, the processor determining a time associated with the receipt of the first status indication message in a status table and starting a timer,
15 and the memory storing the status table associated with the terminal identification number.

13. The system of claim 12 wherein the status table stored in memory further comprises a second communication path indicator associated with the terminal adapter
20 and the processor compares the first communication indicator with the second communication path indicator and issues a notification message if the first communication indicator is different than the second communication path indicator.

14. The system of claim 12 wherein the processor further examines the first parameter
25 file version number in the first status indication message and responds by sending a second parameter file version number in a response message to the terminal adapter.

15. The system of claim 12 wherein the processor further examines the first parameter file version number in the first status indication message and responds by sending a
30 plurality of addresses in a response message to the terminal adapter.

16. The system of claim 12 wherein the processor further examines the terminal identification number in the first status indication message and responds by sending authentication data in a response message.

5 17. The system of claim 12 wherein the processor upon receipt of a second status indication message resets the status update timer.

18. The system of claim 12 wherein the processor issues an email message to an address determined in part by the terminal identification number when the status update
10 timer exceeds a defined amount.

19. The system of claim 12 wherein the processor upon the status update timer exceeding a defined amount displays a message on a computer monitor comprising contact information including a telephone number.

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20. The system of claim 12 wherein the terminal adapter comprises software loaded in a computer adapted for point-of-sale applications.